



For immediate release

IDOC Inmate Tests Positive for Tuberculosis

Indianapolis, IN (June 6, 2014) – The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) have determined that an offender at Pendleton Correctional Facility has tested positive for active tuberculosis (TB) disease.

The offender has been transferred to the Miami Correctional Facility into an isolated negative air flow room and has begun the standard four-drug treatment regimen. Staff at Miami who may come into contact to the offender will wear protective masks until the offender is no longer infectious.

Offenders and staff who came into contact with the patient during the infectious period will be screened for symptoms and given a Tuberculin Skin Test (TST), which shows whether a person has ever been exposed to TB bacteria. Any individuals who test negative will be retested again in ten weeks. Those who test positive will receive follow-up testing to determine TB disease or latent TB. Individuals who test positive for TB disease will be placed in isolation and begin treatment immediately. Those with latent TB will begin treatment, but will not need to be placed in isolation. All transfers in and out of Pendleton have been temporarily suspended, and all offenders who have been screened for TB are currently on non-contact visits, pending the outcome of testing.

TB is caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine, and brain. If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal. It is spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, or speaks. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected. There is no vaccine for TB.

Due to the increase risk of communicable diseases in a correctional setting, the IDOC and its medical contract service provider, Corizon, follow an aggressive TB control plan for screening and treatment of suspected cases. Facility staff receive TST tests annually in compliance with American Correctional Association standards and every offender is screened for symptoms at intake.

An estimated two billion people worldwide are infected with the bacteria that cause TB, although most people with latent TB infection never develop the disease. In these people, the TB bacteria can remain dormant for a lifetime without causing problems. However in others, especially those with weak immune systems, the bacteria can become active and cause TB anywhere in the body.

Indiana experienced 94 cases of TB disease in 2013 and 102 in 2012. Every year, there are 2 to 4 deaths in the state as a result of TB. More than 90 percent of individuals diagnosed with TB successfully complete treatment and are cured.

For more information about TB, please visit www.StateHealth.in.gov.

Media Contacts:

Ken Severson

Media Coordinator

Indiana Department of Health

(317) 607-7180
kseverson@isdh.in.gov

Douglas S. Garrison
Chief Communications Officer
Indiana Department of Correction
(317) 501-1626
dsgarrison@idoc.in.gov

Amy Kent
Communications Director
(317) 650-5558
akent@idoc.in.gov